United Nations S/2004/195

Security Council

Distr.: General
12 March 2004
English
Original: French

Letter dated 4 March 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Central African Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the presidential communiqué issued by the Minister of Communication, National Reconciliation and Democratic and Civic Culture, the Government spokesman, following the hospitality accorded to President Jean-Bertrand Aristide (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Fernand **Poukré-Kono**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

04-26984 (E) 150304 150304

Annex to the letter dated 4 March 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Central African Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Presidential communiqué

The Central African Republic is a country of peace. The cradle of the Bantus, according to the words of the founding President of our country, Barthélemy Boganda, has always been a welcoming and hospitable country where a stranger passing through can find lodging and shelter.

The Central African Republic also cultivates a tradition of dignity, dignity and respect for the human person. It is the homeland of *zo kwe zo*.

Imbued with this philosophy and our ancestral values, the President of the Republic and head of State, Division General François Bozize, today carried out an historic act of worldwide significance. At the request of his brother and senior, the dean of the heads of State of Central Africa, His Excellency El Hadj Omar Bongo Ondimba, the President of the Republic agreed to receive and welcome the former President of the world's very first black republic, Haiti, Mr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

During this period of consensual transition and in view of this grave responsibility but also his duty as a citizen and general officer, the head of State took care to inform the principal actors of this transition, namely the Vice-President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, the head of Government and the President of the National Transition Council.

The Central African Republic as a whole and united behind its leaders, therefore, is receiving a person who is in difficulty and in need of finding true hospitality.

It is also, therefore, a purely humanitarian act for it will not be said that the Central African Republic has derogated from its sacred tradition of hospitality as a welcoming land.

Owing to a strange coincidence, our country's guest has come from a distant land, Haiti, the country of Toussaint Louverture. Son of a slave and a general officer, he fought against oppression and slavery and for human dignity. Toussaint Louverture died in that struggle precisely 200 years ago, far from the land of Africa, from which his ancestors had been deported.

President Aristide is returning to Africa today under painful circumstances.

When a man in need knocks at the door, you take no notice of his colour, race or rank. You receive him and offer him what little you have. This is in accordance with *ga nzoni*.

Nevertheless, on behalf of all Central Africans, the President of the Republic wishes to assure the fraternal people of Haiti of his solidarity in the ordeal that he is currently undergoing. The President hopes that peace returns very speedily to that Caribbean island, for the well-being of all Haitians. He is also counting on the understanding and solidarity of the international community.